



Federal Task Force on Environmental Education

The Task Force facilitates communication and collaboration among federal agencies and departments who have common interests in supporting and implementing EE programs. The Task Force places emphasis on supporting joint interagency EE projects that leverage both federal and non-federal dollars. Members include the U.S. Departments of Education, Interior, Agriculture, and Energy as well as NASA, the National Science Foundation, and the Peace Corps. EPA serves as chair of the Task Force.

EPA Environmental Education Advisory Board

The Advisory Board provides leadership for EE and facilitates communication and collaboration across EPA. The 28-member Board represents EPA's Headquarters as well as regional offices and research laboratories across the country. The Board places emphasis on providing leadership within EPA, improving the quality of and public access to EPA's educational resources, enhancing communication within EPA, and supporting state-level EE programs.

National Environmental Education and Training Foundation

The Act also established the Foundation to encourage public-private partnerships in support of environmental education and to complement EPA's EE efforts. The Foundation awards one-year challenge grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$40,000. The Foundation has also initiated programs in Environmental Health, Business and the Environment, Volunteerism in Natural Resource Management, and Educational Achievement in the Classroom.



Office of Environmental Education *In Brief*





In Brief

The National Environmental Education Act of 1990 requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to provide national leadership to increase environmental literacy. The Act encourages partnerships and builds upon long-standing environmental education (EE) efforts conducted by federal and state agencies, education institutions, not-for-profit organizations, and the private sector. The following briefly summarizes the programs and activities of EPA's Office of Environmental Education (OEE).

Programs

The Act establishes the following programs which are administered by OEE in coordination with EPA's ten regional offices.

Grants

Each year EPA awards more than 200 grants worth between \$2 to \$3 million to support quality EE projects. Since 1992, EPA has awarded more than 1,500 grants worth about \$16 million to schools and universities; state, local, and tribal agencies; and not-for-profit organizations in all 50 states and several U.S. territories. Most awards are for grants of up to \$25,000. EPA's priorities in 1998 include projects that educate community leaders and others about human health threats from pollution; build state, local, or tribal capacity and/or use EE to advance state or local education reform goals; educate the public through community-based organizations; and educate low-income and culturally diverse audiences.

Training for Education Professionals

EPA makes a multi-year award to a consortium of universities and non-profit organizations to deliver training to education professionals nationwide. This program was initiated in 1992 with a \$5.4 million award to a consortium led by the University of Michigan. Under this program, the consortium developed resource materials ("EE Toolbox"), created an EE Internet site ("EE-Link"), and conducted training workshops. In 1995, this training effort was extended through a five-year, \$9 million award to a consortium led by the North American Association for Environmental Education. This program, called the Environmental Education and Training Partnership, builds upon the work initiated by the University of Michigan. The program delivers training to education professionals through existing programs; improves access to quality EE materials by linking EE databases and by developing EE guidelines; and sustains long-term training efforts by strengthening partnerships and building state-level capacity.

College Fellowships

The National Network for Environmental Management Studies is a fellowship program that encourages college students to pursue environmental professions by conducting an environmental research project. The program reaches more than 100 students annually at more than 400 participating universities. Each year, EPA managers and scientists design new projects based on EPA's priorities.

Youth Awards

The President's Environmental Youth Awards program recognizes young people across America for their projects

that demonstrate commitment to environmental protection. Nominees receive certificates from EPA's regional offices. In addition, one nominee from each region becomes a national winner honored by EPA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Linkages with Internal and External EE Experts and Programs

The Act establishes an external advisory council and a federal task force as well as a public-private foundation as mechanisms to help EPA develop lasting partnerships, leverage resources, and obtain advice from EE experts inside and outside of the federal government. EPA has also established an internal advisory board to facilitate communication and collaboration across EPA. These groups are discussed below.

National Environmental Education Advisory Council

The Council is comprised of representatives from organizations outside of the federal government who provide EPA with advice on implementing the Act. The 11-member Council also provides EPA with important linkages to schools, universities, state departments of education and natural resources, not-for-profit organizations, and business and industry. The Council reports to Congress on the status of EE in the U.S., makes recommendations for improving these efforts, and works with EPA to implement these recommendations.



For additional information,
call (202) 260-4965 or (202) 260-8619 (grants only)

Or visit the World Wide Web at
<http://www.epa.gov/enviroed>

